

U.S. Patent Appln. No. 10/726,759

Docket No. 9665-1

Amendment

Reply to Office Action dated March 22, 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The amendments to the drawings attached include one replacement sheet, showing Figs. 6A and 6B. Reference numeral 53-1 has been added to Fig. 6B.

Attachment: one replacement sheet

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REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and these remarks are in response to the Office Action dated March 22, 2005. This amendment is timely filed.

At the time of the Office Action, claims 1-24 were pending. Objections were raised to the drawings, abstract and specification. Claims 1-24 were objected to for informalities. Claims 3-10 and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Claim 20 and 21 rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Claims 2, 11-14, 18, 19 and 22-24 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 3-10 and 15-17 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office Action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The rejections and objections are set out in more detail below.

I. Drawings

The drawings were objected to for informalities. Suitable amendments to the specification to introduce the missing reference numerals, and a corrected drawing sheet are submitted herewith. Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

II. Abstract and Specification

The specification, including the abstract, was objected to for numerous informalities. The specification is amended herein to overcome the objections. A substitute specification is enclosed herewith. The substitute specification contains no new matter. Paragraph numbers from the application as published are used herein. Withdrawal of the objection to the specification is believed to be appropriate, and is respectfully requested.

{WP242445;1}

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III. Claim Objections

Claims 1-24 were objected to for the informalities listed in the Office Action. The claims have been amended herein, and withdrawal of the objection is thus respectfully requested.

IV. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claims 3-10 and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Appropriate amendments are made to the claims herein in order to correct each of the claim deficiencies listed in the Office Action. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3-10 and 15-17 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is therefore believed to be appropriate.

V. Rejections on Art and Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,467,761 to Amatucci et al. ("Amatucci"). Claims 20 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,298,975 to Khoury et al. in view of Amatucci. Claims 2, 11-14, 18, 19 and 22-24 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 3-10 and 15-17 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office Action, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has cancelled claim 1 herein, and made all claims previously dependent upon claim 1 dependent upon claim 2, which is rewritten in independent form. Claims 22 and 23 are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

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VI. Conclusion

Applicant has made every effort to present claims which distinguish over the prior art, and it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance. Nevertheless, Applicant invites the Examiner to call the undersigned if it is believed that a telephonic interview would expedite the prosecution of the application to an allowance. In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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